NUMB. XXXII.

The SPECTATOR.

Nil illi larva aut tragicis opus eſſe Cothurnis. Hor.

Friday, April 6. 1711.

THE late Diſcourſe concerning the Statutes of the Ugly-Club having been ſo well received at *Oxford*, that, contrary to the ſtrict Rules of the Society, they have been ſo partial as to take my own Teſtimonial, and admit me into that ſelect Body; I could not reſtrain the Vanity of publiſhing to the World the Honour which is done me. It is no ſmall Satisfaction, that I have given Occaſion for the Preſident's ſhewing both his Invention and Reading to ſuch Advantage as my Correſpondent repoſts he did: But it is not to be doubted there were many very proper Hums and Pauſes in his Harangue, which loſe their Uglineſs in the Narration, and which my Correſpondent (begging his Pardon) has no very good Talent at repreſenting. I very much approve of the Contempt the Society has of Beauty: Nothing ought to be laudable in a Man, in which his Will is not concerned; therefore our Society can follow Nature, and where ſhe has thought fit, as it were, to mock herſelf, we can do ſo too, and be merry upon the Occaſion.

Mr. SPECTATOR,

'YOUR making publick the late Trouble I gave 'you, you will find to have been the Occaſi'on of this: Who ſhould I meet at the Coffee'houſe Door t'other Night, but my old Friend Mr. 'Preſident? I ſaw ſomewhat had pleas'd him; and 'aſſoon as he had caſt his Eye upon me, "Oho, Doc"tor, rare News from *London* (ſays he); the SPECTA"TOR has made honourable Mention o'th' Club "(Man) and publiſh'd to the World his ſincere Deſire "to be a Member, with a recommendatory Deſcrip"tion of his Phiz: And tho' our Conſtitution has "made no particular Proviſion for ſhort Faces, yet, "his being an extraordinary Caſe, I believe we ſhall "find an Hole for him to creep in at; for I aſſure "you he is not againſt the Canon; and if his Sides "are as compact as his Joles, he need not diſguiſe "himſelf to make one of us. I preſently call'd for 'the Paper to ſee how you look'd in Print; and after 'we had regal'd our ſelves awhile upon the pleaſant 'Image of our Proſelite, Mr. Preſident told me I 'ſhould be his Stranger at the next Night's Club: 'Where we were no ſooner come, and Pipes 'brought, but Mr. Preſident began an Harangue up'on your Introduction to my Epiſtle; ſetting forth 'with no leſs Volubility of Speech than Strength 'of Reaſon, "That a Speculation of this Nature "was what had been long and much wanted; and "that he doubted not but it would be of ineſtima"ble Value to the Publick, in reconciling even of "Bodies and Souls; in compoſing and quieting the "Minds of Men under all corporal Redundancies, "Deficiencies, and Irregularities whatſoever; and "making every one ſit down content in his own "Carcaſs, tho' it were not perhaps ſo mathema"tically put together as he could wiſh. And 'again, "How that for want of a due Conſi"deration of what you firſt advance, *viz.* that our "Faces are not of our own chuſing, People had "been tranſported beyond all good Breeding, and "hurry'd themſelves into unaccountable and fatal "Extravagancies: As, how many impartial Look"ing-glaſſes had been cenſur'd and calumniated, "nay and ſometimes ſhiver'd into ten thouſand "Splinters, only for a fair Repreſentation of the "Truth? How many Headſtrings and Garters had "been made acceſſary, and actually forfeited, only "becauſe Folks muſt needs quarrel with their own "Shadows? And who (continues he) but is deep"ly ſenſible, that one great Source of the Uneaſi"neſs and Miſery of human Life, eſpecially amongſt "thoſe of Diſtinction, ariſes from nothing in the "World elſe, but too ſevere a Contemplation of an "indefeaſible Contexture of our external Parts, or "certain natural and invincible Diſpoſitions to be "fat or lean? When a little more of Mr. SPECTA"TOR's Philoſophy would take off all this; and "in the mean Time let them obſerve, that there's "not one of their Grievances of this Sort, but per"haps in ſome Ages of the World has been high"ly in vogue; and may be ſo again, nay, in ſome "Country or other ten to one is ſo at this Day. "My Lady *Ample* is the moſt miſerable Woman in "the World, purely of her own making: She e"ven grudges her ſelf Meat and Drink, for fear "ſhe ſhould thrive by 'em; and is conſtantly "crying out, In a Quarter of an Year more I "ſhall be quite out of all manner of Shape! Now "this Lady's Misfortune ſeems to be only this, that "ſhe is planted in a wrong Soil; for, go but t'other "Side of the Water, its a Jeſt at *Harlem* to talk of

"a Shape

" a Shape under eighteen Stone. These wise Traders regulate their Beauties as they do their Butter, " by the Pound; and Miss *Crop*, when she first arriv'd in the *Low-Countries*, was not computed " to be so handsom as Madam *Van Brisket* by near " half a Tun. On the other Hand, there's Squire " *Lath*, a proper Gentleman of Fifteen hundred " Pound *per Annum*, as well as of an unblameable " Life and Conversation; yet would not I be the " Esquire for half his Estate; for if it was as " much more, he'd freely part with't all for a Pair " of Legs to his Mind: Whereas in the Reign of " our first King *Edward* of glorious Memory, no- " thing more modish than a Brace of your fine taper Supporters; and his Majesty without an Inch " of Calf, manag'd Affairs in Peace and War as laudably as the bravest and most politick of his Ances- " tors; and was as terrible to his Neighbours under the royal Name of *Long-shanks*, as *Cœur de Li-* " *on* to the *Saracens* before him. If we look farther back into History we shall find, that *Alexan-* " *der the Great* wore his Head a little o'er the left " Shoulder; and then not a Soul stirr'd out till he " had adjusted his Neck Bone; the whole Nobility address'd the Prince and each other obliquely, " and all Matters of Importance were concerted and " carried on in the *Macedonian* Court with their " Poles on one Side. For about the first Century " nothing made more Noise in the World than Roman Noses, and then not a Word of 'em till they " reviv'd again in Eighty eight. Nor is it so very " long since *Richard* the Third set up half the Backs " of the Nation; and high Shoulders, as well as " high Noses, were the Top of the Fashion. But " to come to our selves, Gentlemen, tho' I find by " my quinquennial Observations that we shall never " get Ladies enough to make a Party in our own " Country, yet might we meet with better Success " among some of our Allies. And what think you " if our Board sate for a Dutch Piece? Truly I am " of Opinion, that as odd as we appear in Flesh " and Blood, we should be no such strange things " in Metzo-Tinto. But this Project may rest till " our Number is compleat; and this being our E- " lection Night, give me Leave to propose Mr. " SPECTATOR: You see his Inclinations, and perhaps we may not have his Fellow.

' I found most of 'em (as it is usual in all such ' Cases) were prepar'd; but one of the Seniors ' (whom by the by Mr. President had taken all this ' Pains to bring over) sate still, and cocking his ' Chin, which seemed only to be levell'd at his ' Nose, very gravely declar'd, "That in case he had " had sufficient Knowledge of you, no Man should " have been more willing to have served you; but that " he, for his Part, had always had regard to his own " Conscience, as well as other Peoples Merit; and " he did not know but that you might be a handsome Fellow; for as for your own Certificate, it " was every Body's Business to speak for themselves. ' Mr. President immediately retorted, "A handsome " Fellow! why he's a Wit (Sir) and you know " the Proverb; and to ease the old Gentleman of ' his Scruples, cry'd, "That for Matter of Merit it " was all one, you might wear a Mask. This ' threw him into a Pause, and he looked desirous of ' three Days to consider on't; but Mr. President ' improved the Thought, and follow'd him up with an old Story, "That Wits were privileg'd to " wear what Masks they pleased in all Ages; and " that a Vizard had been the constant Crown of " their Labours, which was generally presented " them by the Hand of some Satyr, and sometimes " of *Apollo* himself: For the Truth of which he ' appeal'd to the Frontispiece of several Books, ' and particularly to the English *Juvenal*, to which ' he referred him; and only added, "That such Au- " thors were the *Larvati*, or *Larvâ donati* of the " Ancients. This clear'd up all, and in the Conclusion ' you were, chose probationer; and Mr. President ' put round your Health as such, protesting "Th.t " tho' indeed he talk'd of a Vizard, he did not " believe all the while you had any more Occasion " for it than the Cat-a-mountain; so that all you ' have to do now is to pay your Fees, which here ' are very reasonable if you are not imposed upon; ' and you may stile your self *Informis Societatis So-* ' *cius*: Which I am desired to acquaint you with; ' and upon the same I beg you to accept of the ' Congratulation of,

Sir,

Oxford,
March 21. *Your oblig'd humble Servant*,

A. C.

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